

THE STORY OF THE THREE BEARS [BY R. SOUTHEY, VERSIFIED BY G.N.].

G. N, Robert Southey



THE STORY
OF
THE THREE BEARS.



SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
WRIGHT, 60, PALL-MALL.

1839.



DEDICATION.

Unknown Author of "THE DOCTOR,"
Great, original Concoctor
Of the rare story of the Bears,
Their porridge-pots, their beds and chairs,
Which you with condescending pen,
To please " Good little women and men,"

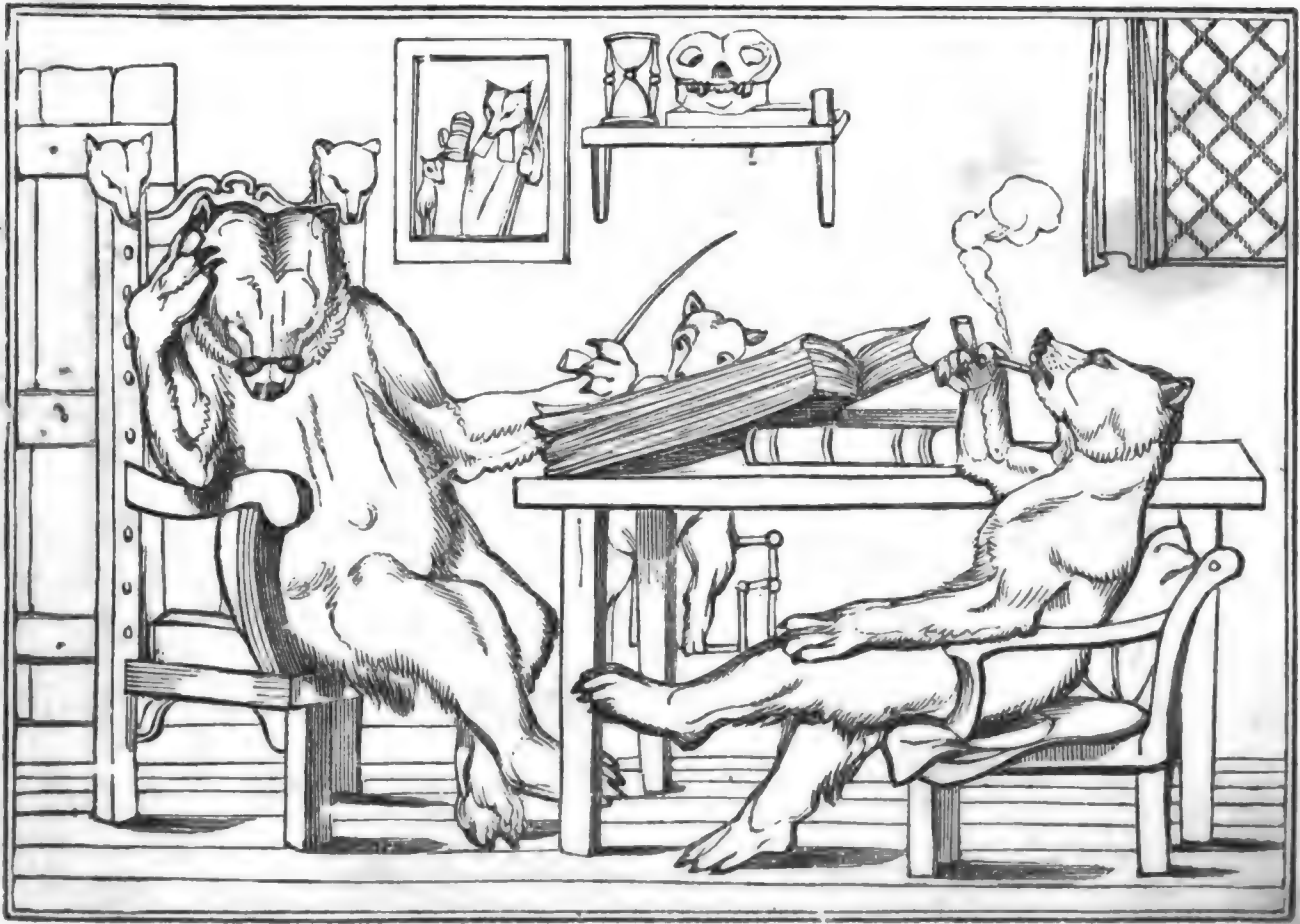
Have writ—I pray you to excuse
The freedom of my rhyming muse,
For having ventured to rehearse
This tale of your's in jingling verse ;
But fearing in your book it might
Escape some little people's sight,
I did not like that one should lose
What will them all so much amuse.

“The robb’d that smiles”—so Shakspeare wrote—
“Steals something from the thief.” I quote
This line in hope that you will smile
Upon this little book, the while
You turn the leaves and pictures view,
Which a young skilful artist drew,
Who quite delighted with the story
Employ’d his pencil, *con amore*—

Thus hoping, Sir, I've but to state
That it, with admiration great
And much respect, I dedicate
To you, and am,—whate'er your name,
Which some day will be known to fame,
Though hidden now from public ken,—
Your humble copyist,

G. N.

July, 1837.



THE THREE BEARS.

Three Bears, once on a time, did dwell
Snug in a house together,
Which was their own, and suited well
By keeping out the weather. ✓

'Twas seated in a shady wood,
In which they daily walk'd,
And afterwards, as in the mood,
They smok'd and read, or talk'd.

One of them was a great huge Bear,
And one of a middle size,
The other a little, small, wee Bear,
Withsmall red twinkling eyes.

These Bears, each had a porridge-pot,
From which they used to feed ;
The great huge Bear's own porridge-pot
Was very large indeed. ✓

A pot of a middle-size the Bear
Of a middle-size had got,
And so the little, small, wee Bear,
A little, small, wee pot. ✓.

A chair there was for every Bear,
When they might choose to sit ;
The huge Bear had a great huge chair,
And filled it every bit. ✕

The middle Bear a chair had he
Of a middle-size and neat ;
The Bear so little, small, and wee
A little, small, wee seat.

They, also, each one had a bed
To sleep upon at night :
The huge Bear's was a great, huge bed,
In length, and width, and height.

The middle Bear laid down his head
On a bed of middle-size ;
The wee Bear on a small, wee bed
Did nightly close his eyes.

One morn their porridge being made
And pour'd into each pot,
To taste it they were all afraid
It seem'd so boiling hot.

“A burnt child dreads the fire”—A Bear
Doth dread it just as much,
As these Bears proved, in taking care
Their porridge not to touch,



For they most cautious had become
From having once before
Their mouths severely burnt with some,
Which made them dance and roar !

They, therefore, let their breakfast be
Till it should cooler grow—
And meantime for a walk the three
Into the wood did go.

And now a little old woman there
Came, whilst the Bears were out ;
Through window, keyhole, everywhere,
She peep'd and peer'd about : √.

And then she lifted up the latch
And through the door she went,
For hold of all she could to snatch
No doubt was her intent.



The Bears had left the door undone
 Whilst strolling in the wood,
For they suspected harm from none
 They were, themselves, so good.

The little old Dame had entered in,
 And was well pleased to find
The porridge-pots, and that within
 They held food of such kind.

Now had she waited till home came
The Bears, most likely they
To breakfast might have asked the Dame,
And begg'd of her to stay.

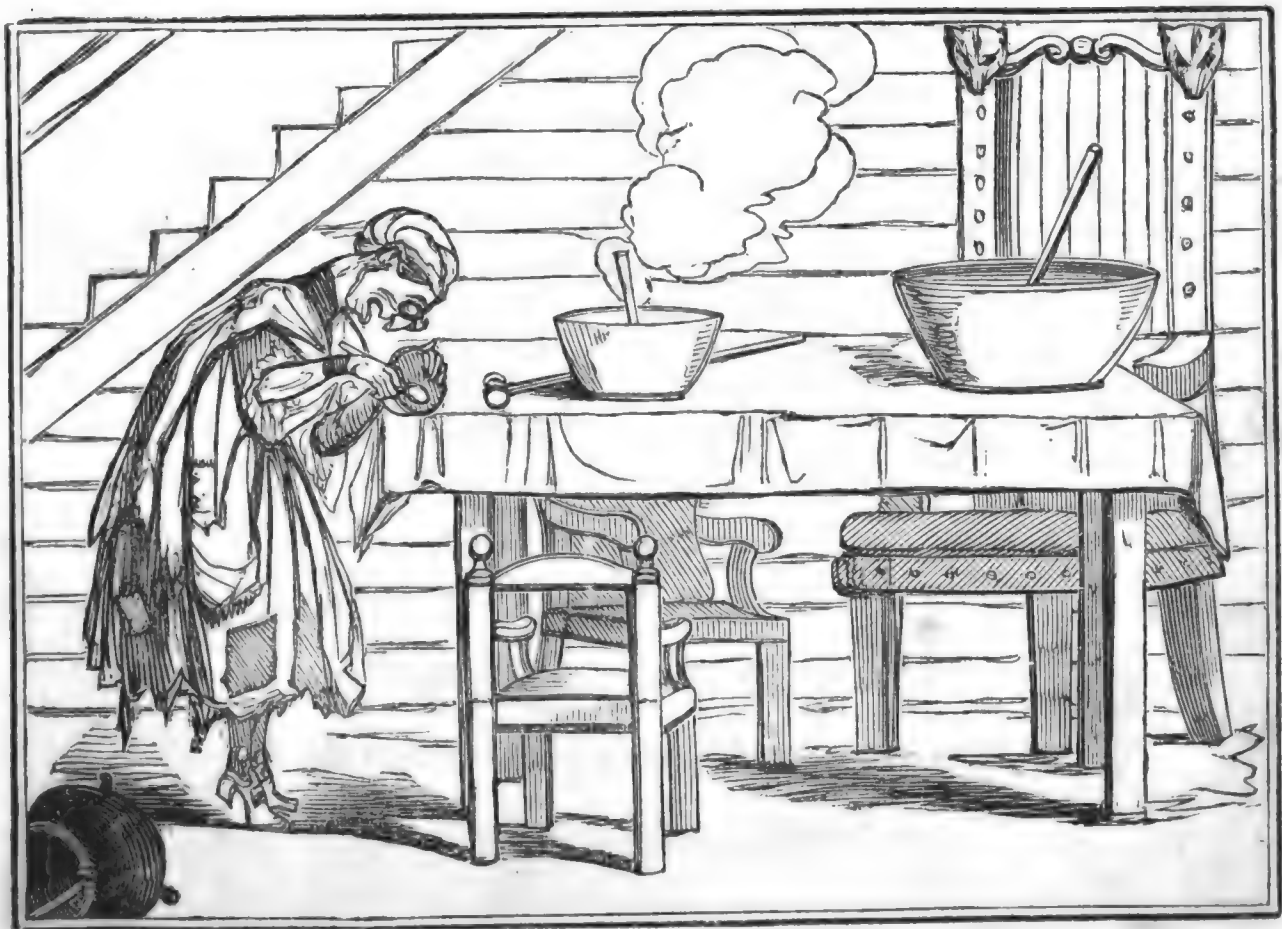
But she was impudent and bold,
And cared for none a pin ;
So quickly of a spoon laid hold
The porridge to dip in.

And first out of the great Bear's pot
The porridge she did taste,
Which proving to be very hot
She spat it out in haste.

She burn'd her mouth, at which half mad
She said a naughty word ;
A naughty word it was and bad,
As ever could be heard.

The middle Bear's she tasted next,
Which being rather cold,
She disappointed was, and vexed,
And with bad words did scold.

But now to where the small, wee Bear
Had left his small, wee cup
She came, and soon the porridge there
By her was eaten up.

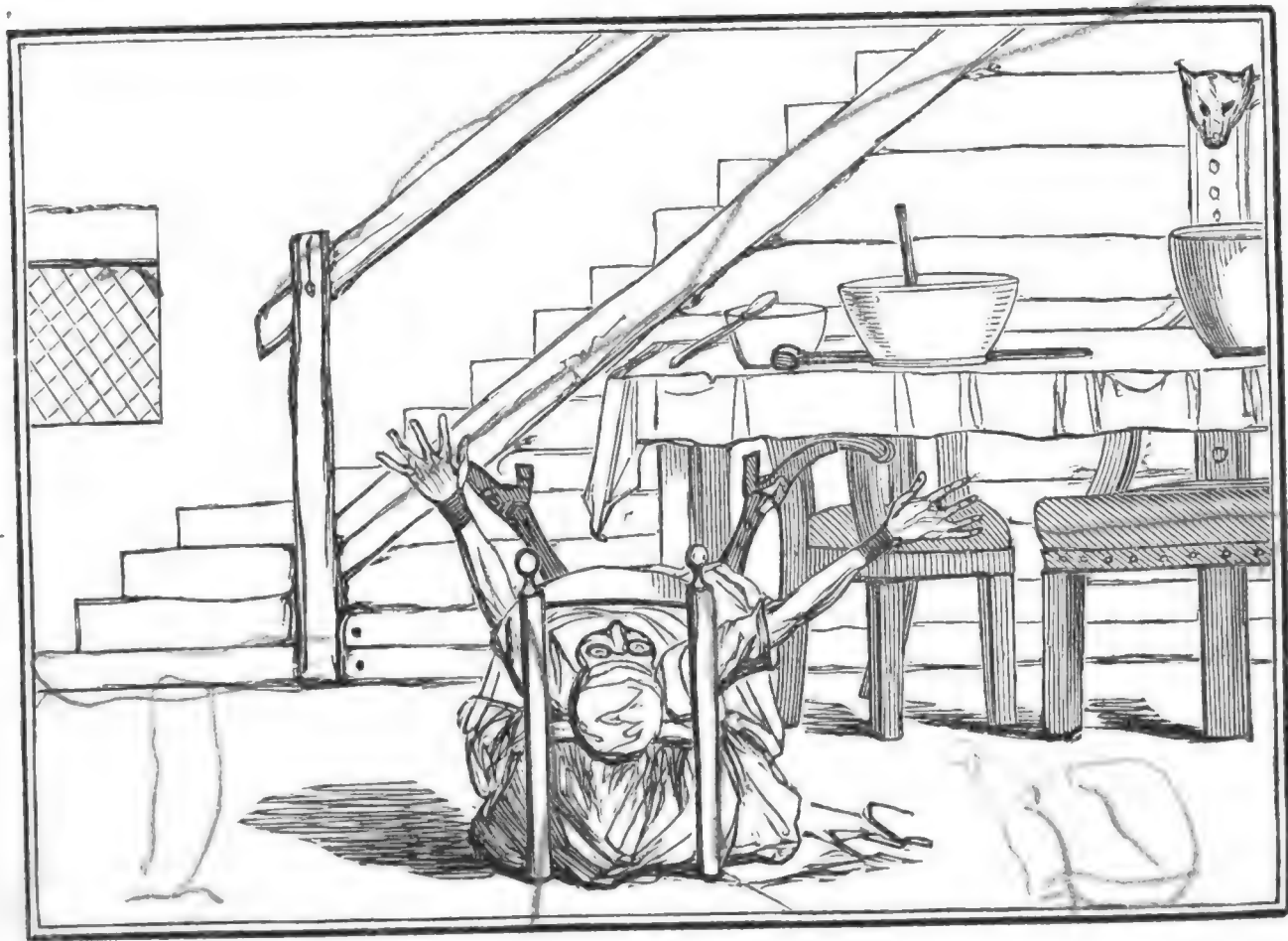


A wicked word she spoke again
As wicked as before,
Because this pot did not contain
Many a spoonful more. √.

Then down the little old woman sat
Within the huge Bear's chair,
But much too hard for her was that,
And so she staid not there.

Next she tried the middle-sized one
And that too soft she found ;
Then sat the small, wee chair upon,
Which fitted her all round.

Now here for sometime sat the Dame
Till half inclined to snore,
When out this wee chair's bottom came
And her's came on the floor



A wicked word about this too

She spoke—then went up-stairs,

And poked her ugly head into

The bed-room of the Bears.

And down upon the huge Bear's bed

She lay, which was too high

To suit her little ugly head,

Which easy could not lie.

Then to the middle Bear's she goes
And quick upon it got,
But at the foot too high it rose,
And so she liked it not.

Now down upon the small wee bed
She lay, and it was quite
The thing, both at the foot and head,
And fitted her just right.



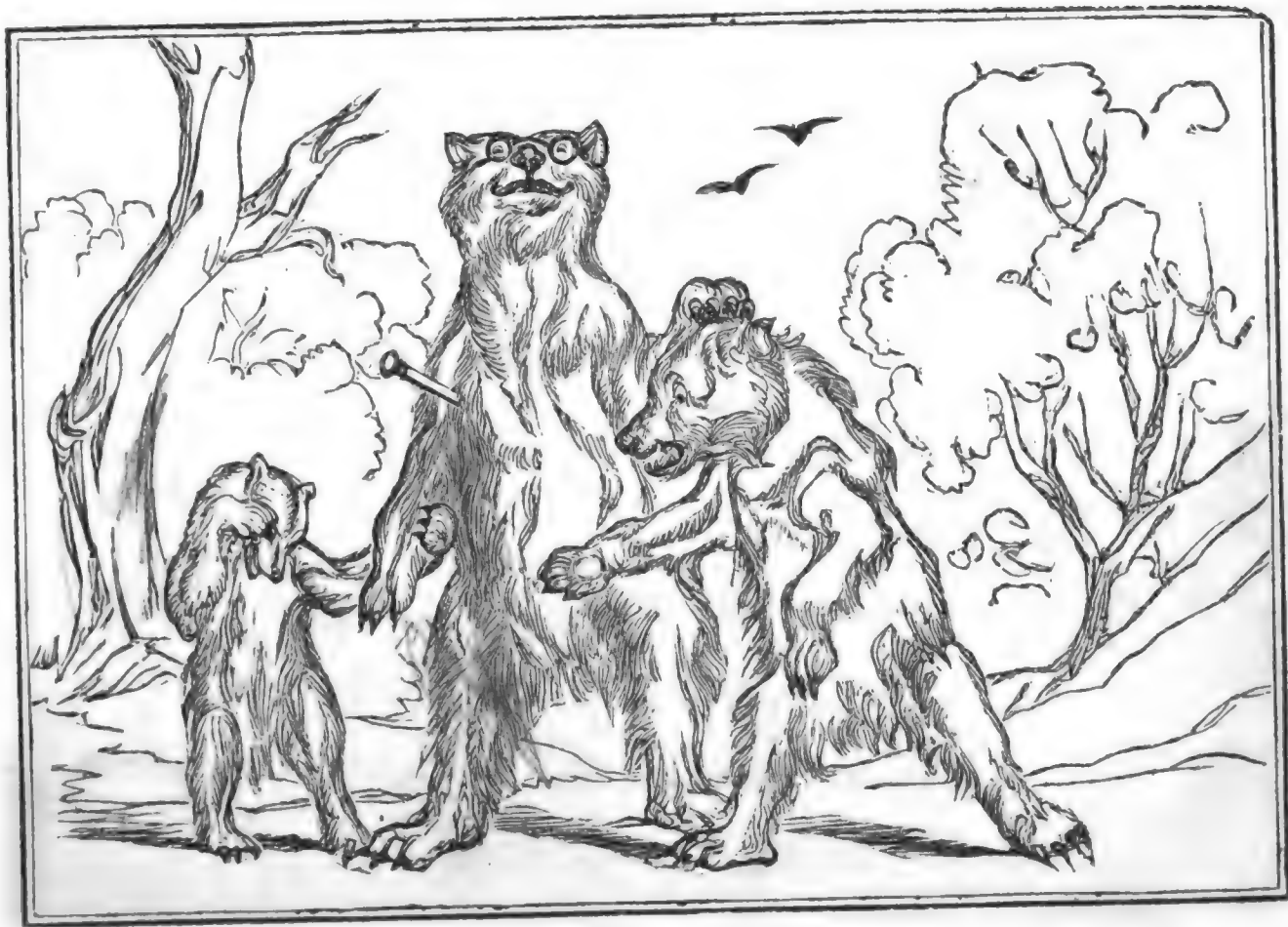
Thus finding that it suited well
Within the clothes she crept ;
Then soon into a slumber fell
And snug and soundly slept.

Although the morning sun shone bright
And birds did sweetly sing,
She slept, as if it had been night,
This sad, old, lazy thing.

The three Bears in their jackets rough
Now came in from the wood,
Thinking their porridge long enough
To cool itself had stood.

“Somebody has at my porridge been !”

The huge Bear's gruff voice cried ;
For there the spoon was sticking in,
Which he left at the side.



“ Somebody has at my porridge been !”

**Then said the middle Bear,
For also in his pot was seen
The spoon, which made him stare. ✓**

**These spoons were wooden spoons, not made
Of silver, else full soon
This wicked Dame would, I'm afraid,
Have pocketed each spoon.**

The small Bear's small voice said, as in

He peer'd to his wee cup,

"Somebody has at my porridge been,

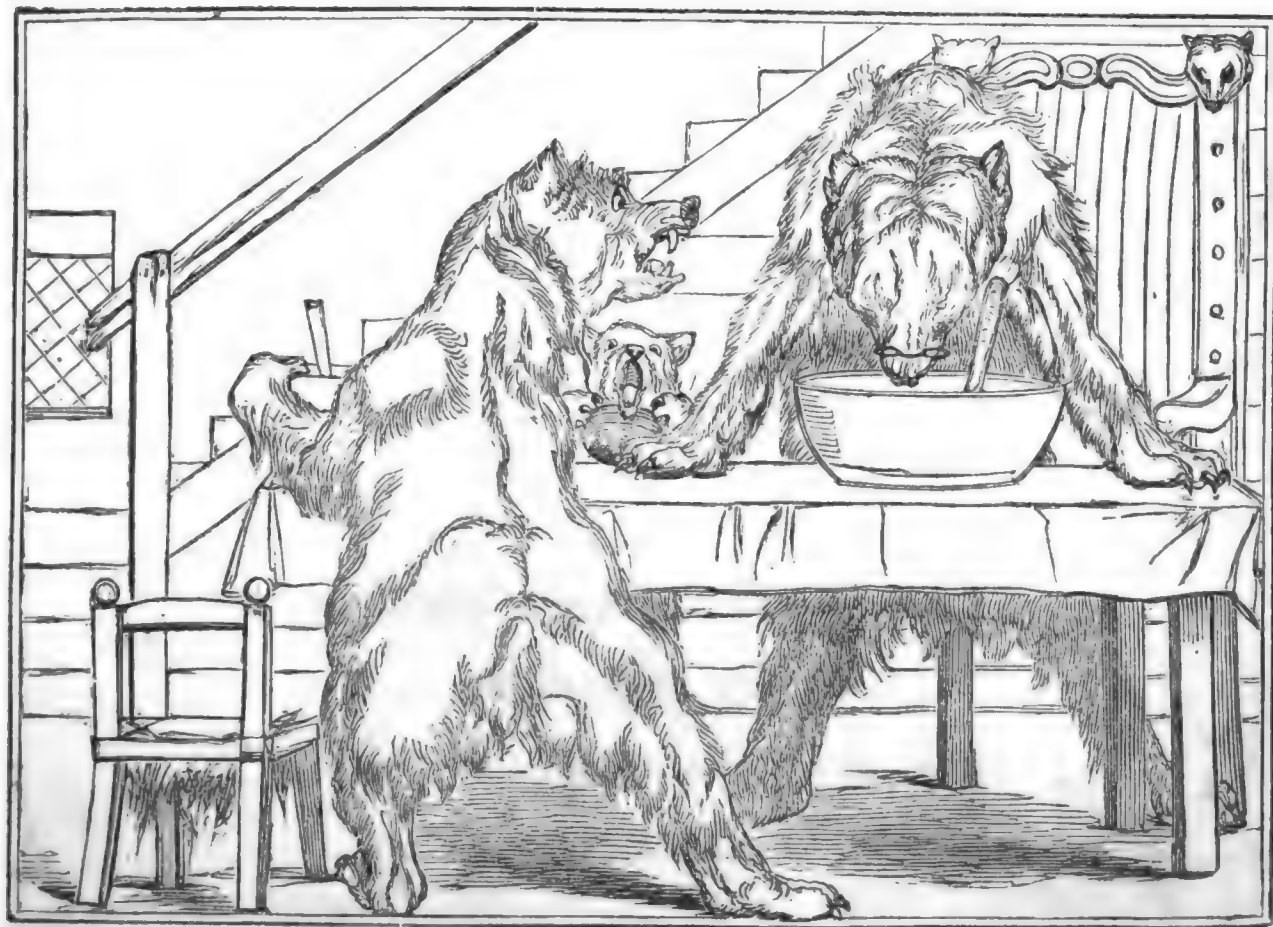
And eaten it all up!"

On this the three Bears finding that

The while they had been out,

Some one the door had entered at,

Began to look about.



“ Somebody in my chair has sat! ”

With voice so gruff and great
The huge Bear said, when he saw that
His cushion was not straight.

“ Somebody in my chair has been ! ”

The middle Bear exclaim'd ;
Seeing the cushion dented in
By what may not be named.

Then said the little small wee Bear,
Looking his chair into,

"Some one's been sitting in my chair,
And sat the bottom through!"

Now having search'd the house below
Most prudently these Bears,
Thought it just as well to go
And do the same up-stairs.



“ Some one’s been lying in my bed !”

Cried out the great huge Bear,
Who left his pillow at the head
And now it was not there.

“ Some one’s been lying in my bed !”

The middle Bear then cried,
For it was tumbled at the head
And at the foot and side.

And now the little wee Bear said
With voice both small and shrill,

“Some one’s been lying in my bed,—
And here she’s lying still!”



The other Bears look'd at the bed,
And on the pillow-case
They saw her little dirty head
And little ugly face.

The little old woman had the deep
Voice of the huge Bear heard,
But she was in so sound a sleep
She neither woke nor stirr'd :

For it appear'd to her no more
Than thunder rumbling by,
Or than the angry winds, which roar,
And sweep along the sky.

And she had heard the middle Bear,
Whose middle voice did seem
To her asleep, as though it were
The voice but of a dream.

But when the small, wee Bear did speak,
She started up in bed,
His voice it was so shrill, the squeak
Shot through her ugly head.

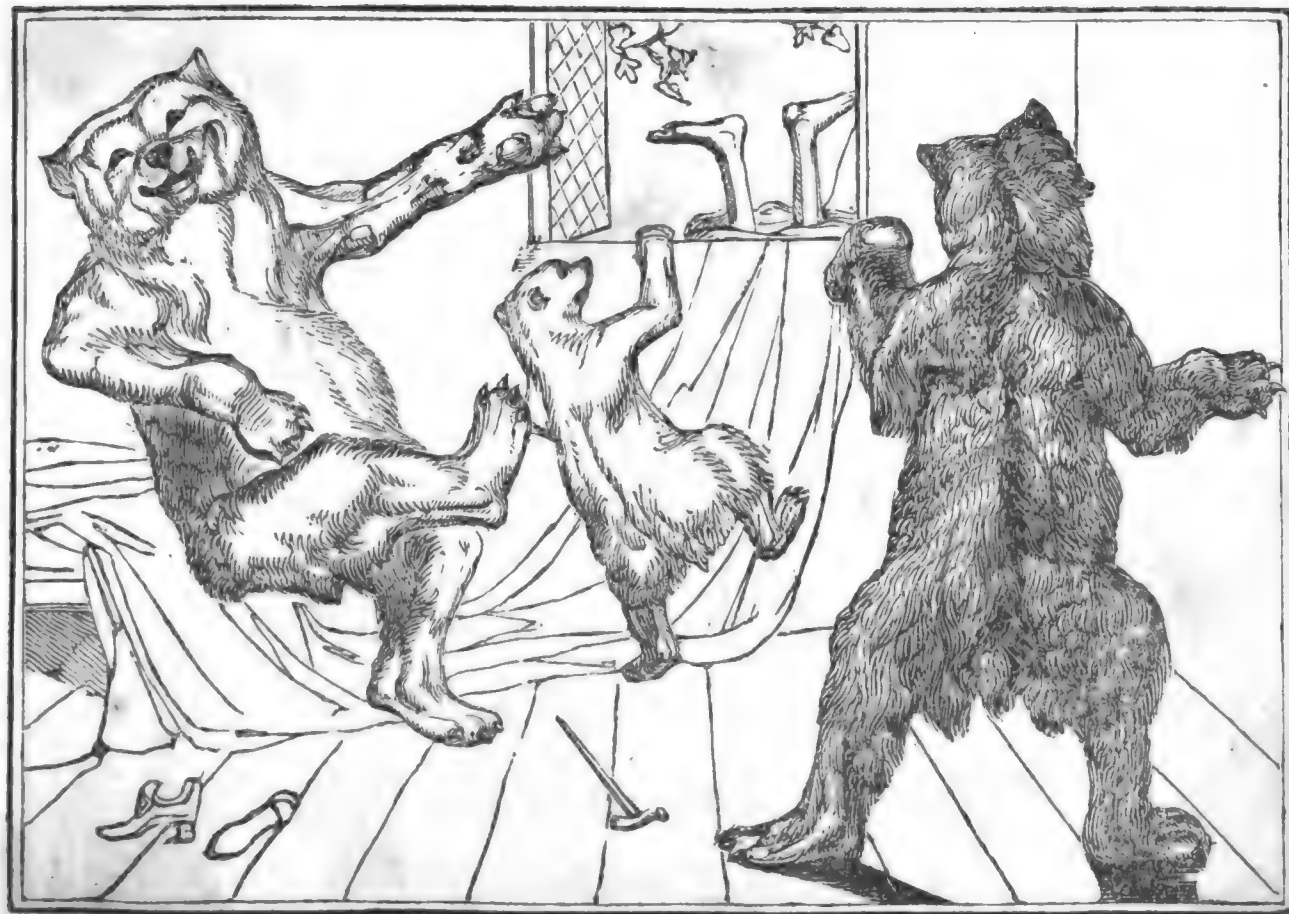


She rubb'd her eyes, and when she saw
The three Bears at her side,
She sprang full quick upon the floor—
And then with hop and stride

She to the open window flew,
Which these good tidy Bears
Wide open every morning threw,
When shaved they went down stairs.

She leapt out with a sudden bound,
And whether in her fall
She broke her neck upon the ground,
Or was not hurt at all,

Or whether to the wood she fled
And 'mongst the trees was lost,
Or found a path which straightway led
To where the highways cross'd,



And there was by the Beadle caught
And taken into jail—
This sad old woman good for naught!—
Remains an untold tale. ✓

THE END.



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